



OFFICE DESIGN TOOLKIT

How to revamp and optimize your office space

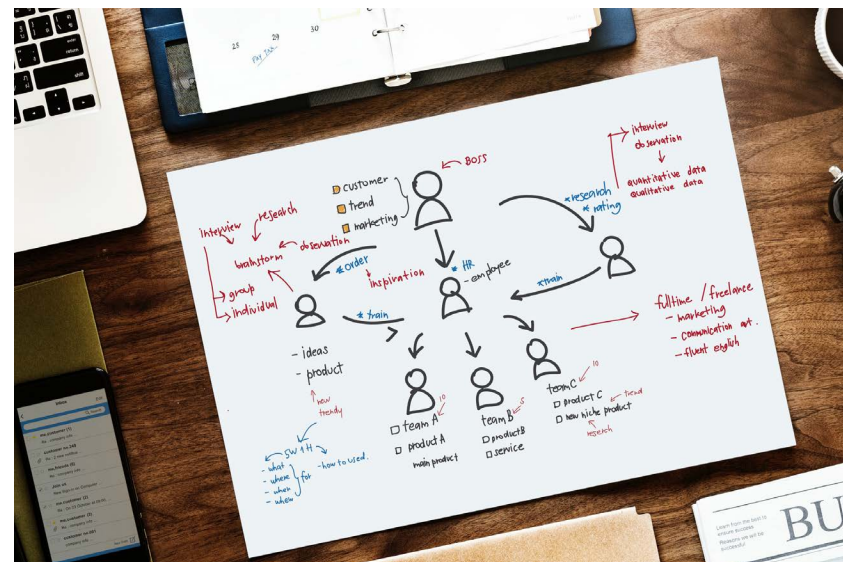
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Getting Started

Whether you have a brand new office space to make ready for your team or you're revamping and optimizing an old space, this comprehensive office design toolkit will take you through the steps you need to create an optimal workspace.

Explore the sections of this ebook to get tips for office layouts, decor ideas, and the best technology for your office. Not sure where to begin? Start with our Step-by-Step checklist, which will help you understand all the components of an effective office space.



Step-by-Step Planning Checklist



Designing an office is no easy feat. That's why it helps to have a phase-by-phase plan for following the process through:

Brainstorming Phase

Step 1: Determine your primary objectives

- What does your office space need to accomplish? We'll help you understand what your baseline primary objectives should be in the next section of the toolkit.

Step 2: Make a list of nice to haves

- What spaces do you need to have in your office?
- What specific furniture or technology does your office require?
- How many people does your office need to be able to support, both now and in the future?

Step 3: Make a list of must haves

- What would you love to have in your office if you had an unlimited budget?
- Jot down ideas and inspiration you've seen both here and otherwise

Decision Phase

Step 4: Decide on a decor theme

- Need a little help? Check out the design inspiration section of this toolkit!

Step 5: Decide on an office layout

- Do you want an open office layout or private layout? We'll go through the different options in a later section of the toolkit.
- Your office layout will determine much of how you design the overall office space.

Step 6: Decide what technology you'll need

- Will everyone need a computer? What about TV screens and ipads for your conference rooms? Do you need video conferencing software? Later in the toolkit, we'll go through our best tips for technology in office spaces.

Step 7: Decide what furniture you'll need

- Beyond just desks, tables, and chairs, what other furniture do you need and want in your office space?
- How will you buy furniture? Will you buy it in bulk, from a reseller, or will you make purchases over time?

Implementation Phase:

Step 8: Create effective meeting rooms

- Effective meeting rooms aren't just about design. It's also about the technology and setup you implement. We'll discuss this in a later section of the toolkit.

Step 9: Create effective personal spaces

- Every employee needs an effective space to do their best work. How you design personal spaces will have a big impact on your company culture.

Step 10: Buy and implement

- The last phase of designing your office space is buy and implementing. In the last section of the toolkit, we'll talk through different plans for how you can do this effectively and on a budget.



Office Design Objectives

Office design might be intuitive to interior designers or property managers, but for business professionals, it likely isn't as simple. After all, most professionals are concerned with meeting their goals or running their business, not figuring out how to design and layout an office space.

With this it's important to remember that the right office design will likely better help you achieve your company's business goals -- by creating the

Safe Working Environment

Your employees should feel safe and comfortable coming to work everyday. When designing an office, it's important to keep in mind:

- Where will employees leave belongings?
- How will employees access the office space during the workday? What about during off-hours?
- Who else has access to the building and how can you restrict access as necessary?
- What security and prevention measures does your business need? This could include locks, cameras, private offices, and more.

environment in which your employees can do their best work. Whether you're working with an interior designer, agency, or you're doing it all yourself, it's important to understand, just like any other project you work on, what objectives you should have in mind when planning your office.

At a bare minimum, these are a few of the objectives you should keep in mind when design an office space.



Enable employees to work best

How can you design a space that will enable office workers to work effectively? This includes thinking about what makes people comfortable and productive. Think about things like:

- Lighting - is there natural lighting? If not, how can you make sure spaces feel natural and conducive to work?
- Is the furniture comfortable? Can employees reasonably be comfortable in a space for 40+ hours per week?
- Is the sound and atmosphere conducive to peaceful work? Don't forget to soundproof your meeting rooms to ensure optimal audio experiences for video conferences!



Best Utilization of Space

An important aspect of effective office design is how to best utilize the space you have for the number of people you both have now and expect to have over time. It's okay to dream big -- but make sure you're dreaming in a way that makes sense for the space you own or lease.

Collaborative

Do employees have the space they need to collaborate? This includes spaces to be creative, hideaways and nooks for office workers to find privacy, as well as meeting rooms and spaces to meet for group conferences.

Functional

What does your team need to function effectively? This includes the technology you'll need on a day-to-day. How should your meeting rooms be setup to make meetings with external vendors, partners, satellite offices, or remote workers effective? Does each worker need a number of screens to do their work? If so, bigger desks may need to be utilized.

All of the above objectives are just examples of things to keep in mind for your office design buildout. Add and define your own objectives during the brainstorm portion of your office design planning.

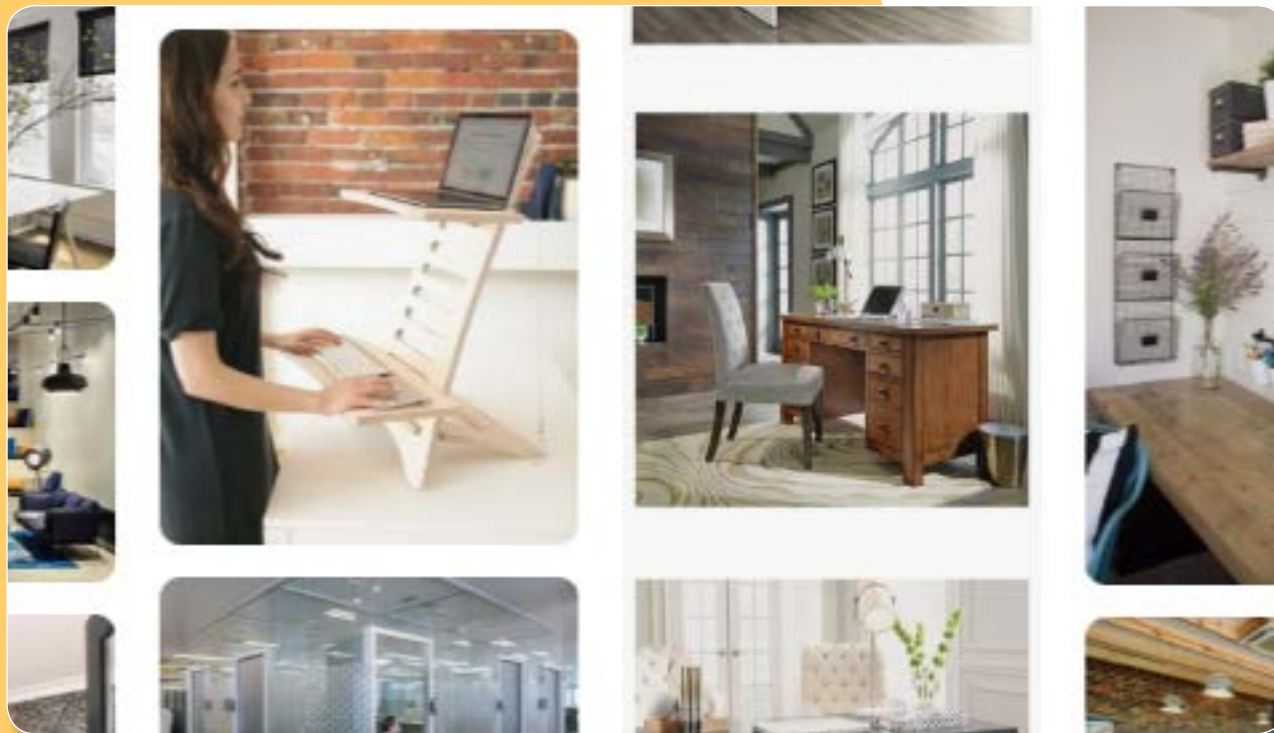
Design Themes and Inspiration

With an endless set of office design options, it's tough to figure out exactly what "theme" to go with in order to create a space that functions and looks good. Over the next few pages, we've put together the most popular interior design themes as well as pinterest boards you can use as inspiration when designing.

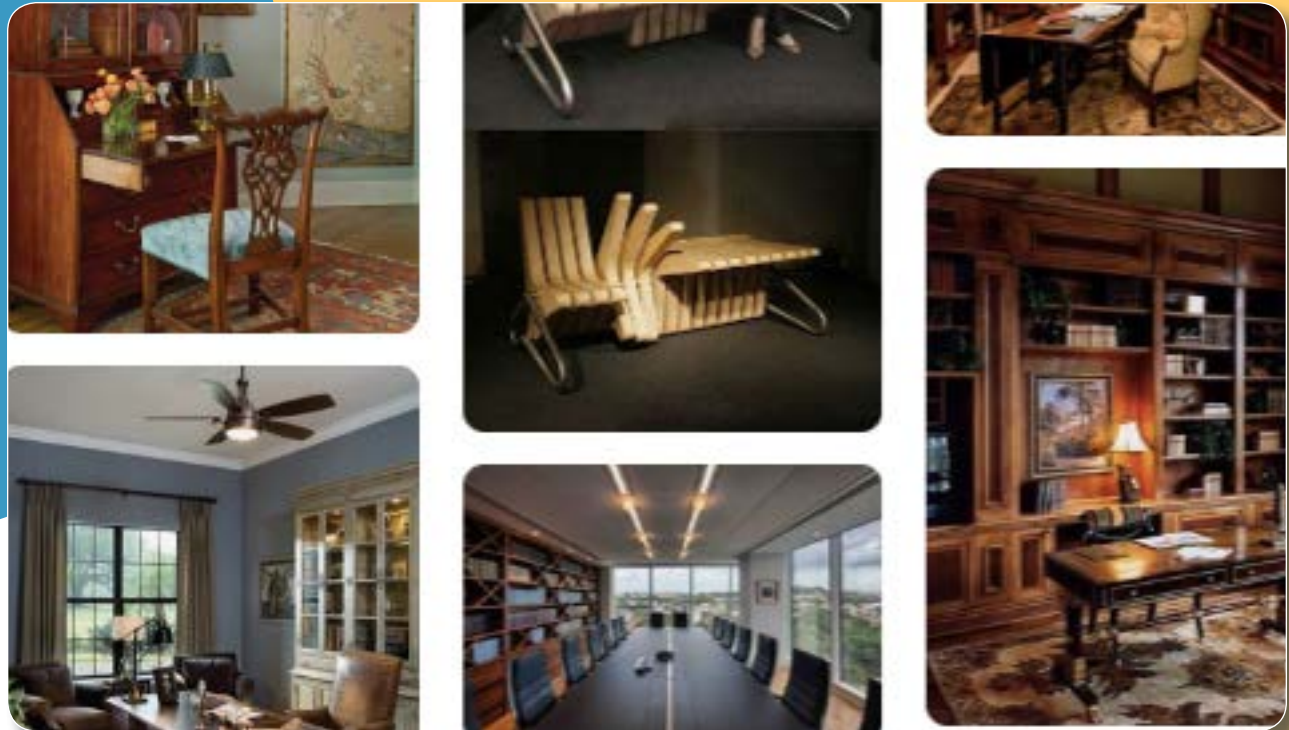
Modern Office Designs

While somewhat difficult to define, interior designers typically describe modern designs as “[clean and unadorned](#).” Modern designs use a lot of natural lighting and natural materials such as wood, leather, and linen.

Check out our pinterest board below for modern design ideas you can use and incorporate into your office design.



Check out the Pinterest Board



Traditional Office Designs

[Traditional interior design styles](#) are defined by the use of European influence, ornate fixtures, regal furniture, and dark, rich colors. If you think offices where workers must wear suits to work everyday, then most likely, the office themselves have a very traditional feel.

Looking for traditional office design inspiration? Check out our pinterest board below for ideas.

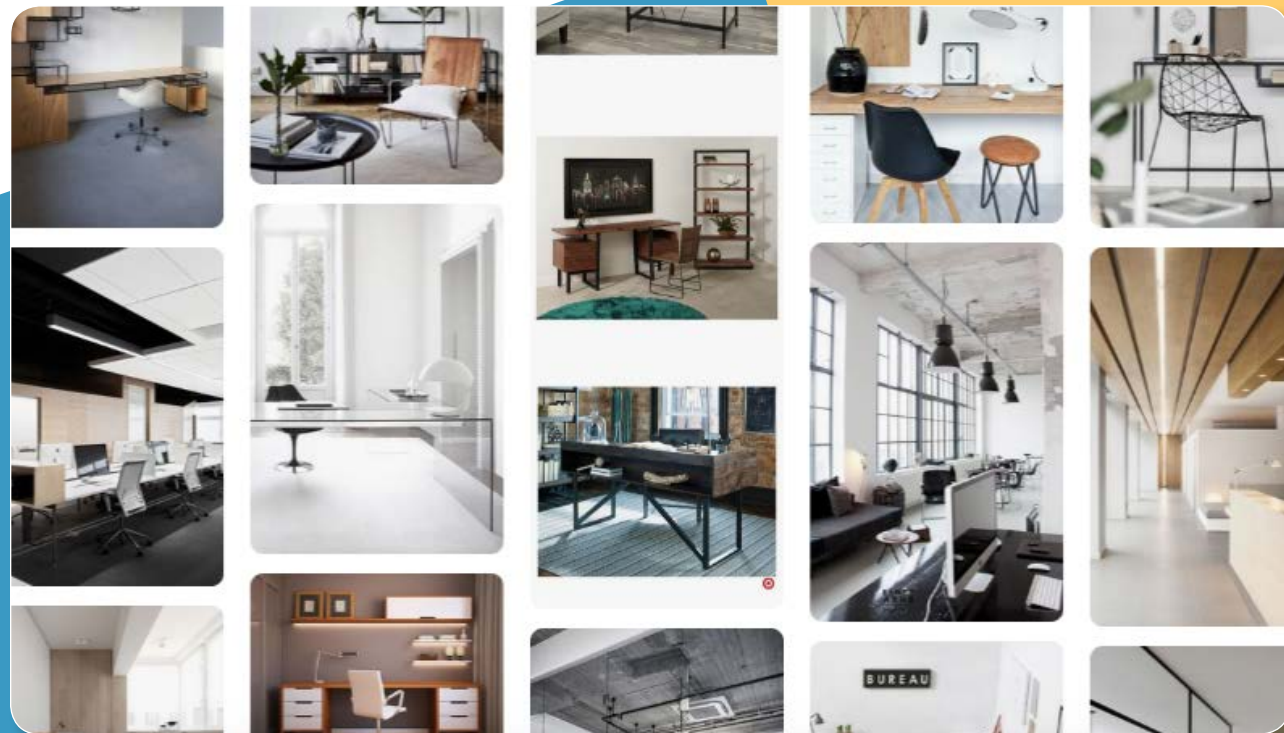



Check out the Pinterest Board

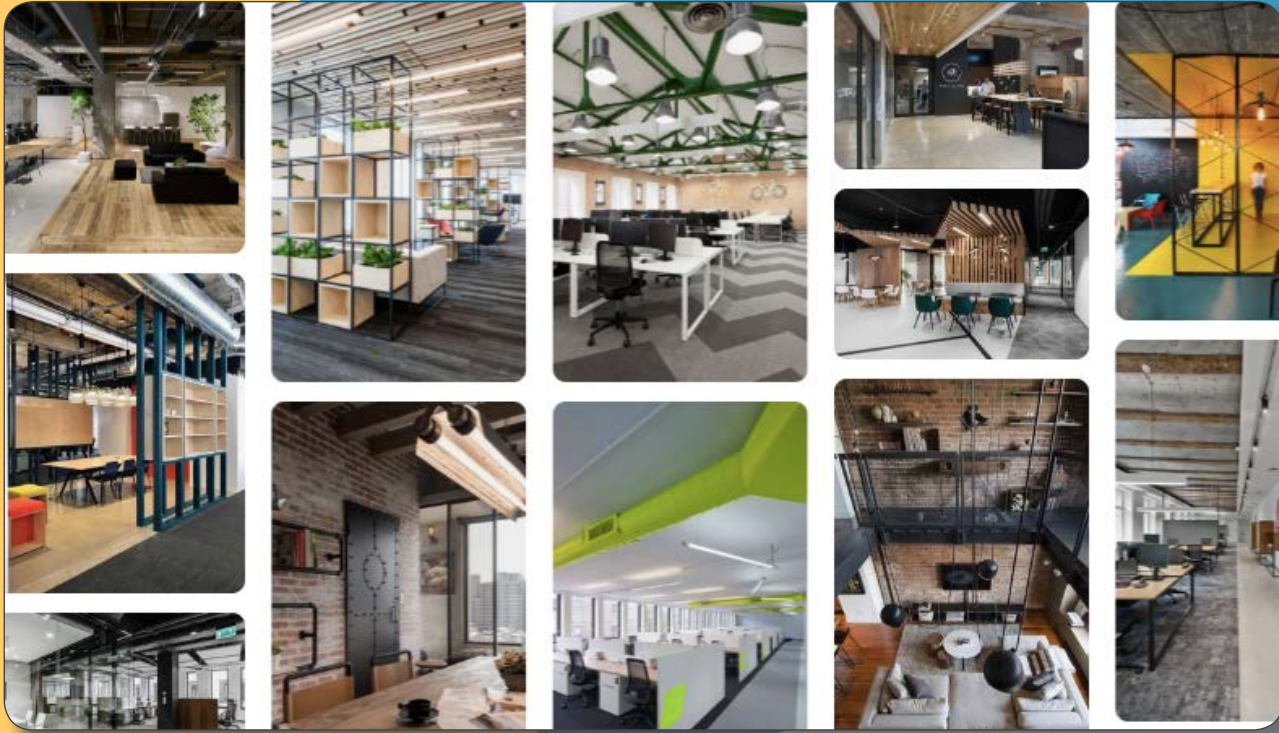
Minimalist

Minimalism takes cues from modern designs and [focuses on neutral colors](#), defined lines, and functionalist. Typically, in minimalist rooms, nothing is over the top or exaggerated. That's not to say, however, that minimalism is boring. Instead, minimalism is clean and distraction-free.

Check out our pinterest board of minimalist office inspiration below.



 Check out the Pinterest Board



Check out the Pinterest Board

Industrial

Industrial designs take inspiration from warehouse or urban loft layouts. Exposed brick and pipes are popular in industrial designs. If you're going for an industrial look, think exposed and unfinished walls with high ceilings and open layouts. One thing to note, however, is that these office spaces tend to cause echos and requires special sound proofing in meeting rooms in order to ensure that your technology works correctly.

Check out some of the coolest industrial office spaces out there in our Industrial Design pinterest board.

Curious to learn more about popular interior design styles for your office? [Check out more here.](#)

Office Layouts

To some extent, the space that you own or rent is going to determine the layout of your office. However, it's helpful to understand how different offices are typically set up so you can decide what you need.

Nomad Open Office

Think of a nomad open office as a coworking space, but just for your organization. Nomad offices have cubicles or desks in a big open room. There are likely several conference rooms that are bookable by employees as well as open-atmosphere collaborative spaces.

The marker of a nomad open office space is that no personal space is assigned. In other words, no one has their own "space" or private office. Instead, each day, workers come in and sit wherever they want. Nomad offices have become popular alongside the increase in coworking spaces. These layouts are especially good for collaboration and when people will regularly be in and out of the office.



Designated Open Office

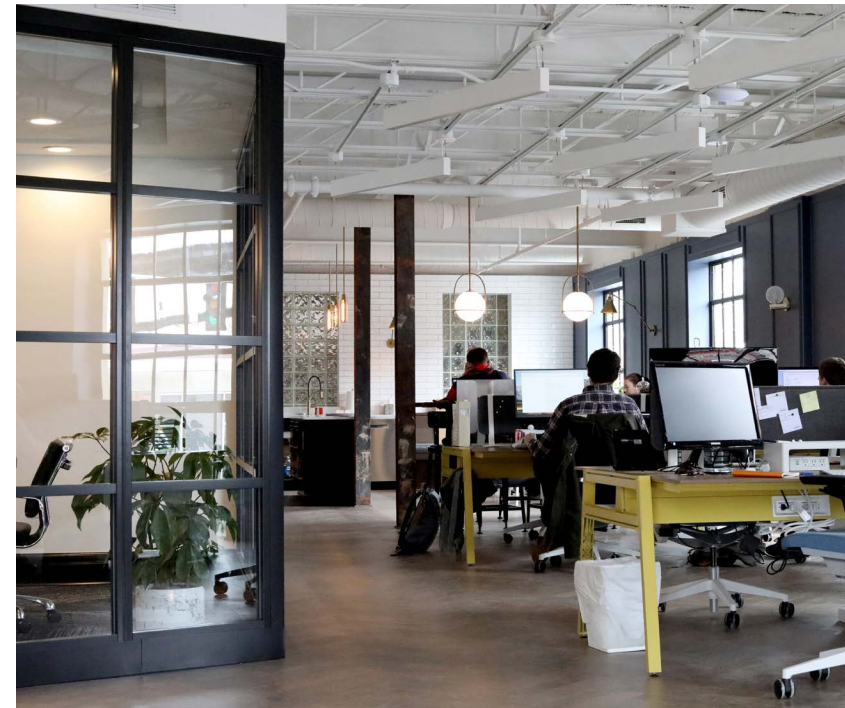
Similarly designed to nomad offices, a designated open office space is marked by not having private offices with doors, but instead, every worker has a designated "space" to come home to. This might be a cubicle or personal desks for employees. Rather than coming in everyday and finding a new desk to sit at, workers have a designated place to sit. The seating may change overtime, but employees can at least expect to leave some personal belongings at their desk overnight.

Designated open office layout still have the open atmosphere feel and aesthetic to nomad office, but with an assigned function to keep things organized. The designated open layout is great for collaboration when people will likely be in the office for most of their days, otherwise, you end up with empty, un-utilized areas.

Private Office

For many traditional workspaces, every employee needs a private area to do their work.

Private offices are spaces where all employees have their own private office and working environment. These spaces are advantageous for professions where a lot of work needs to be kept confidential, like law offices, private practices, or universities.



Combination Office

Many office spaces, today, are combination offices. They might borrow ideas from both open office layouts and private office layouts. For example, many government offices have both private offices for executive or higher-level positions as well as rows of cubicles for lower-level employees.

You might also have a designated open office layout with some nomad spaces designed for people to get up and work away from their desks if they so choose.

Key Components of An Office

At this point you should have your inspiration, objectives, and brainstormed thoughts all in order. Now, it's time we get to the tangible piece of designing your office. In this section, we'll unpack the following questions:

We'll unpack the following questions that will determine your workspace needs:

- What functionality do I need for my meeting rooms?
- What desks do we need?
- What technology should your company use?
- How should I think about incorporating "casual" nomad spaces into the office?

Meeting Rooms

No matter the layout or design of your office, having rooms in mind for group meetings, collaborative projects, or simply private places to hold confidential conversations is a necessary component to any office space. When designing your meeting rooms, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Maximum number of people in a meeting
- If you will regularly have remote participants for your meetings
- How to present content and presentations to large groups of people through screencasting
- How to make sure employees feel like they can have private conversations without risk of other employees hearing
- How to enable remote employees or remote customers to interact with your team flawlessly





Desks

No matter whether you assign desks or have a true nomad open layout, desks are an important, basic part of any office. Make sure to keep in mind:

- The amount of space you have for each desk
- Storage space (for assigned desks)
- How desks will fit together / look together in a room. Are they placed closely together to drive buzz and creativity? Or perhaps you want your desks to be spread out to give employees space and to reduce noise.
- Standing or sitting? Some desks are adjustable for office workers to choose whether to stand or sit at their desk
- Does the desk match your design aesthetic?
- Do you want some semblance of privacy? If so, you may need to choose cubicles over desks.

Casual Work Spaces

Think about how to incorporate more “casual” settings into your office space for your teams to collaborate and get to know one another. This could be as simple as an office break room with a table for everyone to sit at or as creative as some of the casual work spaces featured below.

Whatever it is, casual work spaces can give office the character they need to:

- Make employees feel comfortable and engaged at work
- Create a collaborative atmosphere
- Attract top talent, who are often looking for fun, collaborative work environments
- Give employees a place to work away from their desk

Need some examples of unique casual work spaces? Check out our [pinterest board of ideas](#).



Technology

What technology will your company need? At the bare minimum, employees likely need a computer to work from. But what about technology in your conference room? Below, we've listed our checklist for the tech that every modern company needs.

Employee Personal Workspaces

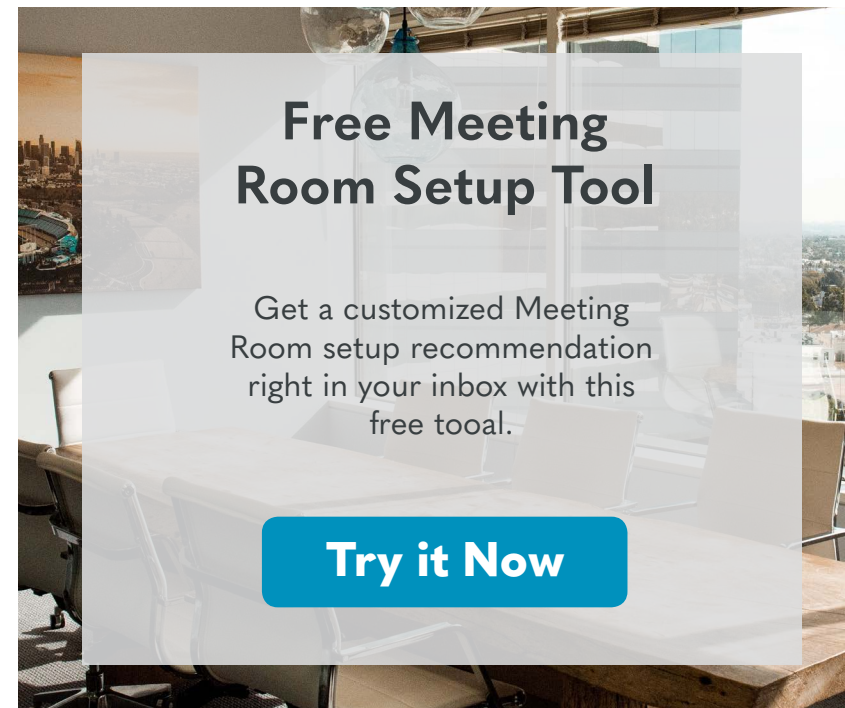
- Personal computer or laptop
- Computer Accessories
- Mouses
- Keyboards
- Additional Monitors
- Headsets for sales and customer service teams
- Audio/Visual Solutions for video conferencing (could be as simple as a built in laptop webcam and microphone).

Group Spaces / Meeting Rooms

- In-room computer to host video conferencing meetings
- Video conferencing software ([check out our video conferencing comparison guide](#)).
- TV screen or monitor for displaying remote participants
- Tablet for starting meetings
- Tablet for signing into the room
- Whiteboards for the wall
- Speaker phone
- Screencasting device
- An audio/visual solution -- try the Meeting Owl!

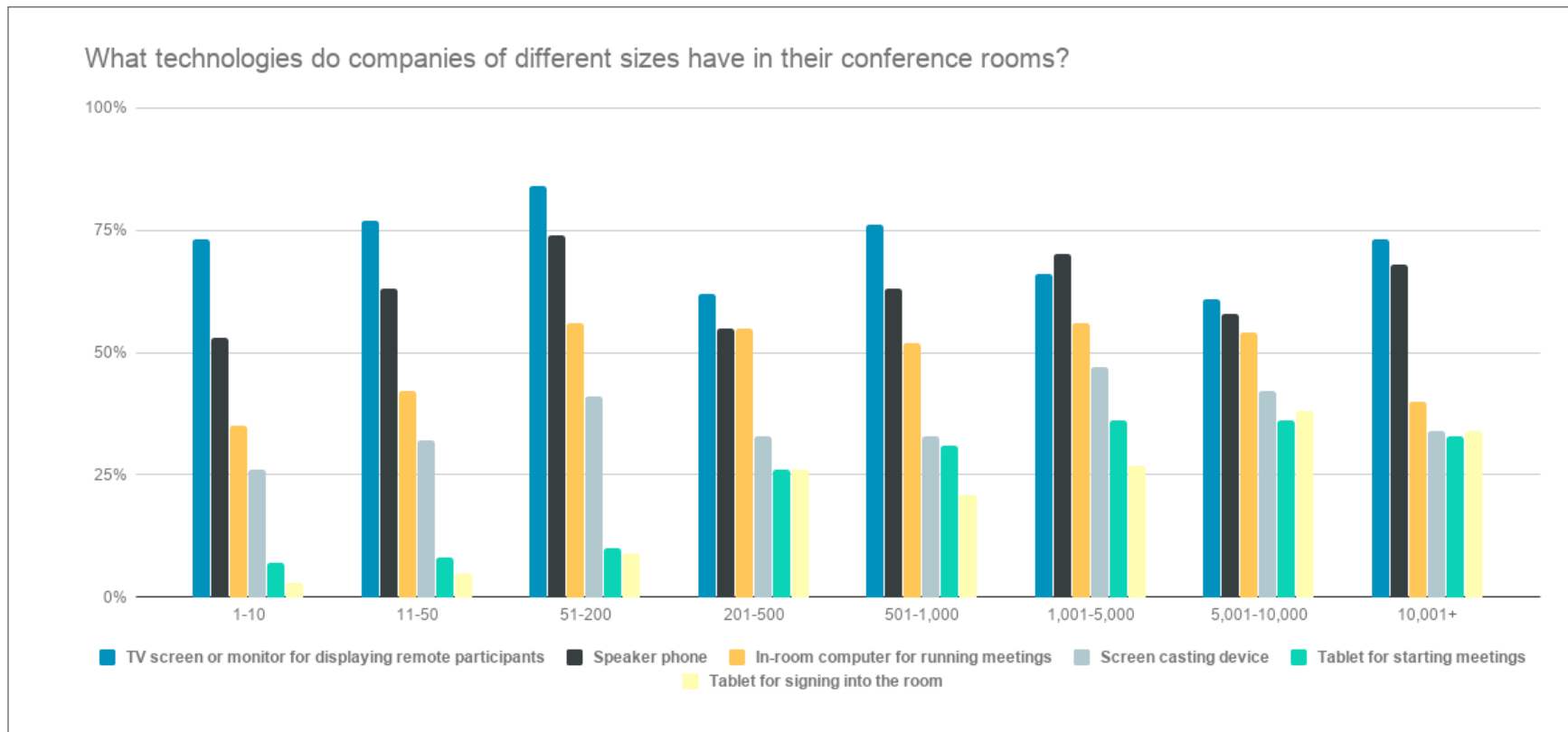
What's the Meeting Owl, you ask? For truly effective collaborative spaces, you need to design an office space that enables in-person and remote employees to come together and do their best work. One of the least collaborative settings, however, is group meetings where remote employees often feel left out of the conversation.

That's where the Meeting Owl comes in. The Meeting Owl is your audio/visual solution built for your video conferencing-enabled Meeting Rooms. It's built to make collaboration between in-house and remote employees easier and more effective by providing a 360° experience. Curious to learn more? [Find out how the Meeting Owl works.](#)



What technology are businesses of my size actually using?

We understand that it can be difficult to decipher what technology you need versus what technology is actually out there. That's why we surveyed over 1,000 businesses to find out what technology businesses of different sizes actually use. Check out the data below:



Incorporating Your Brand Identity

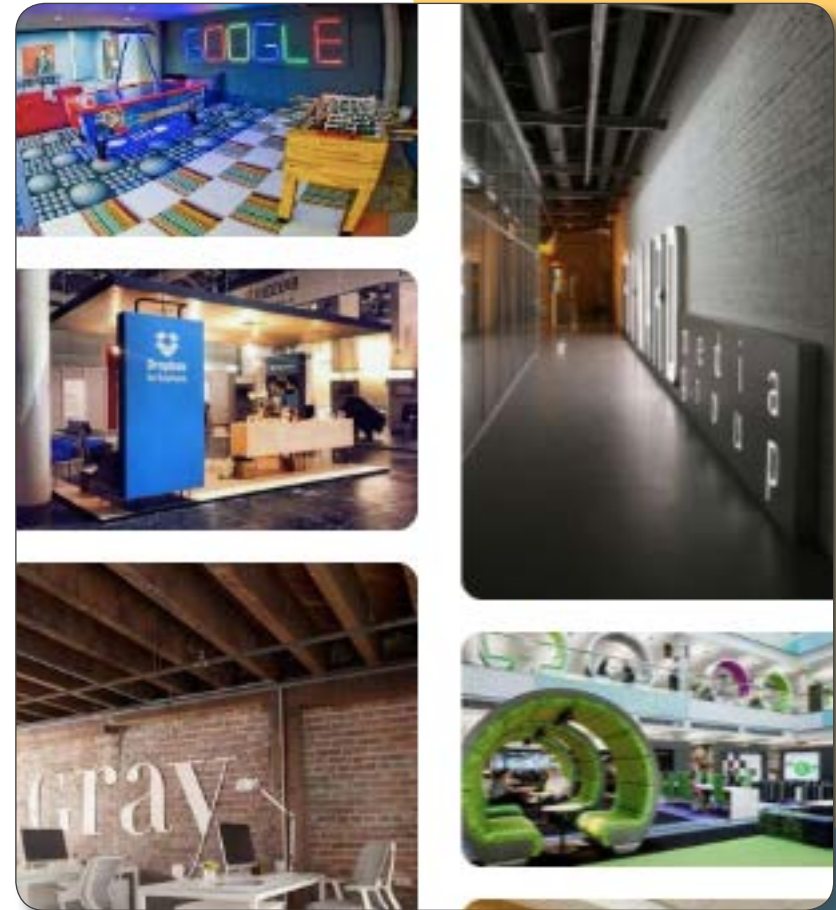
Incorporating Your Brand Identity

For many companies, creating a new office design is a chance to showcase your brand identity within the walls of your space. But how can you do that effectively beyond simply painting your logo and draping the whole office space in your brand colors?

We put together a pinterest board of branded office ideas, but here are a few ideas to draw from as well:

- Use your brand as accents, not as a main showcase. Branded pillows or brand swag at a desk? Great! Giant logos as the main decor? Not as great. Your whole office doesn't need to scream your brand's name at every corner to incorporate your brand into the aesthetic.
- Use muted tones of your brand colors to decorate. If your brand color is orange, you don't have to use bright orange to incorporate the branding. Instead, use light tones of your brand colors throughout the office to create a more natural look.
- Create different aesthetics for each room, all around one facet of your brand. Each room will feel different and unique, rather than one uniform design. Dropbox does this exceptionally well with this San Francisco headquarters office.

Check out the Pinterest Board of Branded Office Ideas.



Check out the Pinterest Board

Final Quick Tips

- **You don't have to do it all at once** - Office Design revamps are pricey. You don't have to do it all at once. Start with one thing at a time -- like updating your meeting room furniture or technology -- and slowly progress until everything is how you want it.
- **Work with a partner or interior design agency** - Many companies choose to work with agencies that specialize in office revamps. Some agencies even help get special discounts. These solutions can make it easier for you to stick with what you know and push the stress of office design aside.
- **Optimize your office for the remote worker** - More and more workers are choosing to work from home (or wherever they feel most effective) and are working remotely either part of the time or full time. If you want to be able to attract the best talent, enabling remote work as an available option is important. Optimize for the remote experience by making sure you have the technology to make it happen. Try the Meeting Owl -- an all-in-one 360° camera built just for that purpose, and pair it with your favorite video conferencing software to check this item off your list.
- **Cheaper doesn't mean better** - Remember to invest in the things that are a priority for you and your company. Just because something is cheap doesn't mean it's better. Don't forget to set priorities on what matters most and invest accordingly.

Any other tips you think we should include? [Tweet us at @OwlLabInc to let us know.](#)

Technology



Rooms



Check out the Pinterest Board



Meeting Owl

The all-in-one audio/visual solution that meets your conference room needs and optimizes for the remote video conference participant.

The Meeting Owl is your 360° camera, mic and speaker for your conference room. The automatic focus is unlike anything at its price point.

[Try it Today](#)